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ABSTRACT

Looking back over the past 5 decades of adult education at University College, Cork, one is struck by the realities of continuity and change as the guiding rationale moved from Roman Catholic reconstructionism to community partnership and empowerment. Structures put in place under President O'Rahilly's sponsorship persisted so robustly they allowed for change to the point where they departed from his ideological position. The administrative structure of the Adult Education Committee, Adult Education Department, and outreach personnel and the outreach and cooperative ethos allowed identification of new needs and more inclusive mechanisms for program development and delivery. Most significant was modification in content of diploma courses to where they were no longer synonymous with Roman Catholic social thinking. Modernization, evident in Irish society from the 1960s, was a potent force for change in university adult education. Challenges to prevailing socio-religious doxa was reflected in new program provision and learning opportunities for adults. The nexus between Catholic Church influence and adult education personnel and programs was reduced considerably as secularist and competing themes and interests were accommodated in a broader model of provision. The 1990s witnessed significant developments in partnership and empowerment as UCC considered its role, structures, and processes in effecting change in delivery and experience of adult education designed to facilitate and promote social inclusion. (Contains 18 references.) (YLB)

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Five Decades of Adult Education at U.C.C., 1948-1998: From Roman Catholic Social Reconstructionism to Community Partnerships and Empowerment

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION

Five Decades of Adult Education at U.C.C., 1948-1998: From Roman Catholic Social Reconstructionism to Community Partnerships and Empowerment

Dr. Máirtín Ó Fathaigh and Professor Denis O'Sullivan

While University College, Cork had been involved in the provision of extra-mural lectures and tutorial classes for workers since the early years of the century, the establishment of the Diploma in Social and Economic Science in 1946 was a major step in the formalization of its provision for adult learners. At the inaugural conferring of the diploma in 1948, Alfred O'Rahilly, the President of the College and the prime mover in the provision of the course, declared as follows:

> "This is a very important day in the history of the College. It marks the first occasion, since the establishment of the college one hundred years ago, that workers were allowed to attend a complete course here. I want to congratulate the workers who have completed two years study in the College and the School of Commerce. I consider it a great honour and privilege to award the Diploma to them today. I hope that many others will follow their example. The door is now open" (Quoted in Ó Murchú, 1989).

Like all University Presidents on such occasions, O'Rahilly was sending out signals to a number of interests: to other Colleges by way of encouragement to commit themselves more to adult education, by way of a broadside against those within U.C.C. who had opposed his earlier initiatives in bringing workers onto the campus, and as a declaration of his intent to expand and develop the adult education diploma programme.

The Diploma in Social and Economic Science was pioneering in its time and innovative in the development of adult education provision. Attempts to understand educational change such as this can usefully begin by considering the interface of the individual, the social and the cultural. In

social action these come together in the form of individual psychology, the group and collective context of the agents involved and their world views and ideologies. O'Rahilly was committed to the reconstruction of Irish society according to the principles of Roman Catholic social teaching and was the leading light of the Roman Catholic Social Movement of the 1930s and 40s. Its espousal of vocationalism, anti-statism, individual voice and subsidiarity can be traced to the 1931 Papal Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. His personal psychology is no less significant in understanding his success as an innovator in University-based adult education, most particularly in countering opposition, cultivating loyalty and breaching the cultural understandings relating to education, social action and adults.

A native of Co. Kerry, O'Rahilly took degrees in Mathematical Physics and Experimental Physics with distinction (for biographical details see Gaughan, 1986). He entered the Jesuit novitiate in 1901 and left the community during the final stage of his preparation for the priesthood. Two years later he married his first cousin against the wishes of both sets of relatives. In 1914 O'Rahilly was appointed as Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Mathematics and Mathematical Physics at U.C.C., becoming Professor of Mathematical Physics in 1917. He was appointed Registrar in 1920 and held that position until his appointment as President in 1943. His publications were wide-ranging and extensive attracting the highest academic awards. He wrote on topics as diverse as electromagnetics, the constitution, money, the burning of Cork City, wheat-growing and flour-milling, the shroud of Turin, labour relations, poverty, property rights, education, and the stigmata of Therese Neumann. His association with the Sinn Féin Movement led to membership of Cork Corporation, internment on Spike Island during the War of Independence in 1921 and election to the Dáil as one of the members for Cork City after the ratification of the Anglo-Irish Treaty by Dáil Eireann. On retiring from U.C.C. he went to live in Blackrock College, Dublin, his wife

having died in 1953. He was ordained a priest in 1955 and died in 1969, just short of his eighty-fifth birthday. The strength of his personality can be gauged from the contradictory human responses he evoked, having been variously described as arrogant, a boorish devil, machiavellian, a genius and the greatest Kerryman of them all. At his most bland, O'Rahilly can be said to have been self-willed and determined, managing to fit at least three careers - academic, catholic apologist and civic activist, - into one life.

The twenty-four students conferred with the Diploma in Social and Economic Science in 1948 had studied sociology and economics at U.C.C. on Wednesday afternoons, and accounting, secretarial and business practice and modern social organisation at the School of Commerce on Monday and Friday evenings, seven and a half hours in all. It incorporated many novel features including paid educational leave, negotiated with the Cork Chamber of Commerce, a broad funding base drawing on U.C.C., the City of Cork Vocational Education Committee, and Cork Corporation, and the provision of learning resources in the form of texts and manuals. Like other well-known innovations in adult education, O'Rahilly was working towards social change rather than individual advancement. In that same conferring speech in 1948 he set out the objectives of his course as follows:

> "There is no doubt that a student who has successfully pursued this course will have a grasp of the big ideological issues confronting the world today. He will understand company and banking statements, he will be familiar with the statistical abstract and the trade journal, he will not be frightened by economic jargon. He will have learned the rules of debate and the conduct of meetings, he will know about filing systems, minutes and account books. He will have knowledge of the history and principles of trade unions. He will be familiar with the Industrial Relations Act and similar legislation. And he ought to have increased facility in speaking and writing on these subjects" (Quoted in Gaughan, 1986).

In modern parlance, what O'Rahilly was seeking was empowerment in all its dimensions: instrumental (communication and critical skills as well as knowledge); expressive (confidence, assertiveness, refusing to be intimidated); ideological (capacity to question beliefs) and activist (motivation and will to take action). But the purpose of this empowerment was to change society according to the principles of Catholic social teaching rather than to improve the career opportunities or life chances of the participants. This emphasis has again come to the forefront in adult education theorising particularly in the context of the relationship between adult education and other visions of society such as those incorporated in the new social movements, for example, feminism, peace and environmentalism.

A measure of how out-of-keeping O'Rahilly was with the thinking of his time on the role of universities in adult education and an indication of the opposition, both latent and explicit, that he had to face down can be gauged from the deliberations and recommendations of the Commission on Higher Education, 1960-1967. It gave a grudging acceptance to the continued provision of adult education on the basis that it made few demands on University resources and provided linkages with the community, but only until such time as the newer sub-university level colleges recommended by the commission would take over this function. This appears to have been the consensual view of the commission in that of the many reservations appended to the report none related to adult education. Furthermore, submissions from within the University and graduate communities betrayed a restrictedness towards University expansion through broadened access by means of evening degrees:

> "It is doubtful whether evening degrees or diplomas are desirable at all ...."
>
> "... diplomas and certificates should be substituted for the so-called evening degrees".

> "It is likely that such courses (i.e. evening degree courses) accentuate existing tendencies at pass degree levels towards lower grades and routine work which, without a tutorial system, could leave its recipients without any real awareness of the nature of higher education."
>
> "Many of these evening students have ability but evening classes as a whole have tended to lower the standards of the general degree, through the final examination which day and evening students take" (pp. 661-662).

Possessed of a less assertive psychology, and lacking the conviction derived from religious belief, it is highly unlikely that even a University President could have ushered in the adult education initiatives that O'Rahilly did two decades earlier.

O'Rahilly's influence on adult education can be discerned at a number of levels. At the individual level, he influenced others who went on to play a formative role in Irish adult education. These included leaders and change agents, not just in University-based adult education but at national policy level and in communities and voluntary associations. Organisationally, he established structures such as adult education committees and departments which served as models for similar structures elsewhere in the country. These formed the links between providers and their constituencies. Their personnel, assuming the role of marginal men, identified changing needs in the community and facilitated the response of the provider bodies through new kinds of learning programmes. Culturally, O'Rahilly paved the way for the principle of lifelong learning and for a broadening of access to University by bringing workers onto the campus and forcing a redefinition of what a University student was. O'Rahilly's psychology, his role as University President and public figure and his religious zeal are crucial in understanding this success as a 'cultural worker' in the transformation of meanings attached to learning, education, social action and adults.

From the late 1950s, shortly after O'Rahilly retired from U.C.C., Irish society began to experience profound change affecting all features of the nationalizing project that had developed in 1923 after a War of Independence against the British and a bitter Civil War. Having gained sovereignty over all but the six northern counties of the island of Ireland, it wasn't surprising that it should look to the distinguishing characteristics of religion (Roman Catholic) and language (Gaelic) to cultivate a sense of uniqueness, pride and cultural identity. A history of colonisation that involved confiscation and resettlement of land, economic exploitation, religious persecution and cultural and linguistic suppression fuelled the political remembrance that constructed a nationalising project within set boundaries of censorship, religious and cultural orthodoxy, linguistic pieties, and economic and trade barriers. The slogan Sinn Féin (Ourselves Alone) captures the spirit of this nationalising project. The erosion of this insulation commenced with the economic programming of the 1950s and gained momentum through social and cultural change from the 1960s.

In this regard, T.K. Whitaker, appointed Secretary of the Department of Finance in 1956, is the key figure. His First Programme for Economic Expansion in 1958 signalled a key redirection in economic development. It abandoned protection in favour of free trade and encouraged foreign-owned manufacturers with a strong export commitment to locate in Ireland. This is seen as a key modernising moment in contemporary Irish society.

A feature of this process of modernization has been a dramatic change in how the institution of education is understood. This has been particularly evident at official level where the theocentric paradigm, which dominated until the 1950s, was replaced by a market paradigm that continues to expand. The theocentric and market paradigms of education can be sketched from official sources such as the reports of the Council of Education which was largely active in the 1950s and such

contemporary reports as those of the National Economic and Social Council, the Industrial Policy Review Group, and the Green Paper, *Education for a Changing World.*

According to the Council for *Education Report on the Function and Curriculum of the Primary School,* (Ireland: Council of Education, 1954) "the school exists to assist and supplement the work of parents in the rearing of children. Their first duty is to train their children in the fear and love of God. That duty becomes the first purpose of the primary school. It is fulfilled by the school through the religious and moral training of the child, through the teaching of good habits, through his instruction in duties of citizenship and in his obligations to his parents and the community - in short, through all that tends to the formation of a person of character, strong in his desire to fulfil the end of his creation" (p.94).

The Council of Education *Report on the Curriculum of the Secondary School* (Ireland: Council of Education , 1962) continues this emphasis: "the purpose of school education, then, is the organised development and equipment of all the powers of the individual person - religious, moral, intellectual, physical - so that, by making the fullest use of his talents, he may responsibly discharge his duties to God and to his fellow men in society". According to this report the aim of the school was to prepare pupils "to be God fearing and responsible citizens" (p.88).

In stark contrast, by 1990, the major national advisory council on social and economic matters (Ireland: National Economic and Social Council, 1990, pp. 313-314) was arguing that in the educational system "the principles of consumer representation, participation, and accountability should be reflected in management and decision-making structures".

In its main recommendations, the Culliton Report (Ireland: Industrial Policy Review Group, 1992, p. 52) gave pride of place to the following criticisms of the educational system:

> "The contribution of productive enterprise to our social and economic objectives should be an issue of primary importance at all educational levels to de-emphasise the bias towards the liberal arts and traditional professions".
>
> "A higher priority must be attached in the education system to the acquisition of usable and marketable skills. This is evident both from the perspective of the requirements of industrial development and for the employment prospects and self fulfilment of young people".

The Green Paper (Ireland: Department of Education,1992, p.11) mirrored these sentiments claiming that "in the business world there is a wide recognition that many Irish young people tend to lack:

> The range of technical skills needed in today's industry;
> The communication and other interpersonal skills sought by employers;
> The critical thinking, problem-solving ability and individual initiative that an enterprise culture requires;
> The language skills to work and win markets across the EC, and to take part in tourism related activities".

How did O'Rahilly's programmes, guided as they were by the theocentric paradigm of education fare in this transition? A limiting feature of O'Rahilly's thinking was his perception of the role of adult education in society. He seemed to be less concerned with adult education as a principle or as a right and more concerned with the nature of the learning that the provision of adult education made possible. The emphasis was on message rather than on medium, on a social project rather than on an organic level of the educational system. The Adult Education Department, accordingly, was to be delivery-based and an administrative structure rather than committed to research and teaching on the processes of adult programmes and learning. The pre-planned curriculum, the class-bound pedagogy and the formal (summative) examination process clearly reflected the restrictive ethos of a mainstream institution such as the University in mid twentieth-century Ireland.

All of this was to change from the end of the 1960s. The Murphy Reports (1970 and 1973) on adult education under the leadership of a former outreach worker from the Department of Adult Education at University College, Cork, were to establish the reality of adult learning in all its diversity and place it within the context of an international discourse with social, psychological, and philosophical dimensions. The Department of Adult Education itself became involved in collaborative projects with other academic departments at U.C.C. including courses in the teaching of adults throughout the Munster region. The confessional character of the programmes changed without ceremony or resistance as new staff in sociology and economics developed programmes of study in keeping with the distinctive ideologies of their disciplines at that time. It was the orthodoxy of prescribed programmes and summative evaluation that was slowest to change as the University bodies successfully resisted change until the 1980s. This illuminates not merely the vulnerability of religious beliefs during a period of modernization but, more significantly, the capacity of secular 'regimes of truth' (Foucault, 1980) to disguise their existence, let alone penetration, as ideologies in eras of religious critique.

Universities were not exempt from the marketization of Irish education. A tangible manifestation of this influence was the reconstruction of the Department of Adult Education as the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education with the intention of developing programme provision in areas of professional development and academic degree courses. However, in the substantial expansion that followed, the more traditional offerings of the department in the areas of community education were also to experience a diversification of courses and spiralling numbers. Furthermore, research over the past two decades beginning with a baseline study in 1979, indicates that programmes such as the Diploma in Social Studies and the Diploma in Social and Community Studies continue to be

experienced as significant sources of change in the lives of the participants. These findings can be briefly summarized in terms of the different dimensions of empowerment.

Instrumental empowerment was found to be evident in a number of features of their personal change experienced by the participants. The most striking manifestation of this is to be found in the predominant belief among the students that their skills and knowledge in a diversity of social roles have been enhanced as a result of taking the course. One has only to consider the range of social roles encompassed - family, community, occupational, economic, cultural, political - to realise the comprehensiveness of this expansion of skills and knowledge and the fact that it reaches beyond mere incremental additions in narrow areas of activity. One finds confirmation of this improved repertoire of skills and knowledge in the greater consumption by the participants of media coverage of serious social issues.

Instrumental empowerment - adding to knowledge and developing skills - is more straightforward than expressive empowerment. Since personal traits are bound up with our social and personal identities, there can be many impediments to change in this regard. Yet, we find more than three-quarters of the students perceiving themselves to have become more confident and open-minded since taking the course. The substantial improvements in tolerance, co-operativeness, sympathy/understanding and sociability are also pertinent to expressive dimensions of empowerment.

The ideological dimension of empowerment is, almost by definition, evasive since it pertains to the perceptions and rationalisations which we take for granted in making sense of our lives and the world we live in. The evidence of interpretive change among the participants is therefore

particularly encouraging. Becoming more aware of other views, being more inclined to listen to them, recognising the fact of one's own socialisation and willing to be self-questioning, all conducive to ideological penetration, are substantially reported.

As a number of theorists on personal change through adult education have observed, the activist dimension of empowerment presents an ethical difficulty for teachers and organisers (see O'Sullivan, 1993). It may be ethically unproblematic to enhance skills and personal traits and to encourage openness and reflection. But to suggest a particular line of action in the light of these changes may well be regarded as a form of control and use of participants - in effect representing their disempowerment. Once participants are capable, in terms of their psychology, emotions, skills and knowledge, of taking whatever action they feel is required and appropriate in the light of their personal transformation, then programme organisers can claim satisfaction at having facilitated empowerment of their participants without compromising their autonomy. We have no idea how the participants represented on these programmes will act in the future. But there is evidence in their critical stance on Irish society, their belief in the efficacy of cooperative effort and in their capacity to change society, that they will not be impeded in pursuing their ideals through a sense of inadequacy, hopelessness or quietism.

Clearly these programmes continue to be found to be major sources of empowerment at the individual and community levels. In the long-term, however, what may prove to be more culturally and educationally significant is the changing paradigms of provision pioneered by the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education. Referred to in terms of partnership and negotiated learning, it is pervasive throughout the activities of the Centre but it can be best epitomised in the context of the Cork Northside Education Initiative.

In 1992, the Cork Northside Education Initiative was established in response to calls for a project which would specifically target the educational needs of adults the Northside of Cork City. The Northside of Cork City is an area of major social and economic disadvantage, with very high levels of unemployment, dependency and early school leaving, and low levels of take-up of further education. It may be argued that many Northside residents are experiencing social exclusion, a concept which embraces the dynamics of poverty and disadvantage.

Brian Harvey, in his evaluation of the Third EU Poverty Programme in Ireland, **Combating Exclusion** (1994) defines social exclusion as:

> "the structures and processes which exclude persons and groups from their full participation in society. It explains that poverty does not just happen: it flows directly from the economic policies and the choices which society makes about how resources are used and who has access to them.... Social exclusion may take a combination of forms - economic, social, cultural, legal - with multiple effects. The term exclusion has connotations of process, focusing on the forces by which particular categories of people are closed off from the rights, benefits and opportunities of modern society. Social exclusion is not just about lack of money, but may be about isolation, lack of work, lack of educational opportunities, even discrimination". (pp. 3-4).

The people on the Northside of the city, who are most in need of the benefits which education can bring, are cut off from these benefits due to factors which are largely beyond their control. These factors may include unemployment, poverty, lack of an educational tradition within the families and communities in which they live, and experience of discrimination through the operation of the educational system. When these factors combine it can be exceedingly difficult for people experiencing them to reach, or indeed aspire, to the higher levels of the educational system. It was within this broad context of circumstances that University College Cork engaged in a partnership and negotiated learning process, a process which, in a positive and challenging way, caused the institution to reflect deeply upon its role and contribution to local society.

Participation by the Irish University sector in partnership with socially excluded/disadvantaged communities is a relatively unexplored form of socio-educational engagement for that institution. In some respects, the concept 'partnership' has, or may, become an educational cliché, an almost dubious euphemism to include any association or relationship, however tenuous, between a university and a community of learners. Partnership, in the Cork Northside Initiative context, was animated on the basis of:

- **a two-way process of open communication** (much emphasis on interpersonal communication) e.g. active listening;
- **a shared unity of purpose** (broader socio-educational purpose);
- **high trust and mutual respect** (equality of roles, contributions and partners);
- **willingness to negotiate** ('win-win basis');
- **sharing of information, decision-making and responsibility** (emphasis on the first person plural 'we' nature of the project);
- **community and individual empowerment process** (dualism in approach).

Essentially, we sought to develop a symbiotic relationship, i.e. a mutually beneficial partnership between organisms of different kinds. This relationship involved, in as far as was possible, local residents and all statutory and voluntary providers of education on Cork's Northside.

Ab initio, the Northside Education Initiative viewed education as playing a crucial role in the process of social *inclusion* or *integration,* but this role depended very much on how education was organised and delivered.

> "If organised according to principles of justice, solidarity, and equity, the education system can ensure access to education by all social groups, minorities, geographical areas, all ages and both genders. Education can provide new opportunities for training, reintegration to the workforce and training for citizenship participation". (Harvey, 1994, p.46).

It was in the concept of social inclusion that the Northside Education Initiative was interested, and in the idea of an educational intervention based on the following characteristics:

I. Social commitment, or a commitment to social change through education.

II. Accessibility to all members of the community.

III. Opportunities for full and open participation in the intervention by the members of the target population, so that they are in control of the educational process, rather than its victims or subjects. O'Sullivan (1993) refers to this type of participation as "*membershipping*".

IV. Attention to the best conditions for learning to take place. These conditions may include induction, confidence-building, and the use of teaching methods conducive to learning, collective awareness, and community empowerment.

In many respects, the University sector, which has long been the province of the socially and economically advantaged in Ireland and disadvantaged and excluded indigenous communities and groupings may be regarded as 'cultural strangers'. This tension between the partners and actors in the partnership process in Cork over the past five years serves to emphasise the fact that their respective roles and contributions in educational development and innovation is best conceived as positions on a broader socio-cultural process and continuum of educational engagement. The partners, as it were, are impacted upon by a combination of influences, experiences, attitudes, expectations, anxieties and insights, a type of socio-cultural capital, which creates a background, or habitus, from which they engage new challenges and situations.

A major challenge for the University sector may be in bringing about a paradigm shift which will be necessary to accommodate and legitimate different aspects of empowerment development programmes at the community level. Professor Chris Duke (1992) in **The Learning University: Towards a New Paradigm?** confronts this issue in the first pages of his book and he asks:

> "Is it helpful to speak of a new paradigm of the university - a new way of seeing and understanding? Has a new idea of the university emerged from the chrysalis of the old, needing but a name for recognition? Do prevailing old assumptions obscure new practices? Does naming alter the reality - for there may be much in a name? It has been said that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet - but changing the terms, fostering new discourse, acknowledging a new paradigm, can in themselves assist a shift of values and assumptions which makes new practices more than superficial. Conversely, is playing with new words a form of protectionism- gestures of change to mask an abiding dominant reality?". (p. 1).

Paradigms, if viewed as overarching frameworks or models, may be valuable in exploring some aspects of the partnership process between UCC and Cork's Northside communities. Policy paradigms are viewed as socio-cultural frameworks that govern the policy process and, it is contended that:

> "they embody linguistic, normative, epistemic, empirical, and methodological dimensions. They regulate how the process of education is to be conceptualised; how it is to be thematised and described; what is to be defined as a meaningful problem; what is to be considered worthy as data; who is to be recognised as a legitimate participant, and with what status; and how the policy process is to be enacted, realised and evaluated". (O'Sullivan, 1993).

A policy paradigm, acting as a form of cognitive filter in the interactions and partnership process between universities and disadvantaged/excluded communities, may operate as a powerful regulatory force and its boundary maintenance function may exclude community issues, themes, problems, data, and 'unacceptable' community representatives from participation and involvement in the process. Policy paradigms, if sufficiently ingrained, strong and inflexible, may assume the status of institutional doxa, and as such they may be difficult *"to effectively question or challenge since they are considered to coincide with the limits of normality and common sense"*. In a very real (and well remembered sense) the process of open partnership adverted to earlier inevitably led to a challenging (in sometimes irreverent terms) of university doxa by 'cultural strangers' from the community settings on Cork's Northside.

The partnership process exposed real (and I believe healthy) divisions and differences between the various partners and stakeholders on the link between participation and partnership and on the continuum of issues ranging from the more traditionalist (and I would argue, the dominant one in the university sector) model of dependency-creating courses on one side to community-empowerment development programmes on the other. Participation emerged as an essential element in the Northside partnership process, and as one observer noted *"people will not commit their own community resources, i.e., labour, energy, information, social relationships, enthusiasm, commitment, if they do not have the impression that the community education activity to which they are contributing is, to a considerable extent, theirs, i.e., controlled and owned by them"*. This sense

of ownership and belonging may be in turn be intimately linked to the eventual sustainability (or collapse) of the educational effort at the community level.

Perhaps the most important resource, community-based information, will not be forthcoming in a consistent, integrated manner if the joint effort is not built on the basic premise that 'people' too are professionals '(experts)' and on some fundamental comprehension and working knowledge of cross-cultural communication strategies and empathic understanding.

We are adverting here to radical socio-cultural and educational changes. This change and challenge is not simply at the administrative and organisational level in the university, but is at the very heart of the educational enterprise, namely, who defines knowledge? Who owns knowledge? Who decides what is knowledge and what is new knowledge? The present model of traditional University Adult Education provision and the assumptions which underpin the mode of delivery and organisation were in contrast to the 'lived experiences' and needs of the disadvantaged/excluded community sectors on Cork's Northside and presented themselves in stark relief during the consultation process.

	UNIVERSITY	***COMMUNITY***
	DEPENDENCY CREATING	***EMPOWERING DEVELOPMENT***
	PROGRAMMES	
(Starting Point)		
• ***Initiation***	Prevailing ideology, doxa of the educational institution	Open agenda, needs identified in community
• ***Focus***	Output - awards measured	Problem solving
• ***Style of Communication***	Top-down. One-way. Impersonal	Participatory, two-way, listening and sharing Personal, interpersonal, intrapersonal
(Direction)		
• ***Thrust of Development***	Existing status quo or top-down	Built from bottom-up. Recognises every participant
• ***Ownership***	Resides with institution High control	Shared ownership and control
• ***Evaluation***	External Expert-led Summative	Participatory Continuous Process oriented Formative
• ***Status***	Formal accreditation Mainstreamed	Often non-accredited Marginalised
• ***Trust***	Low Trust Low discretion Protecting backs Risk avoidance Discourages participation	High trust High discretion Openness/honesty encouraged Permits/encourages risk-taking Promotes participation

It may be useful to focus on some of the significant differences, presented as a continuum, between both types of programmes, and it is important to emphasise that each issue was part of a broader learning process for those of us personally involved in the Northside Initiative. From the university perspective, many aspects of the traditional role of the university, its modes of programme development, forms of assessment and evaluation, one-way style of communication with students, sense of institutional ownership of learning, and status in society, were challenged, formally and informally, during the partnership process. It may well be that universities, as organisations, are similar to individuals in terms of their 'status passage' as they move from one social position to another. The words of Glaser and Strauss (1971) resonated with this presenter as he reflected on his institution's role and 'status passage' in the partnership process with disadvantaged/excluded communities on Cork's Northside, viz., *"ongoing process involving development of strategies, adjustments, negotiations, relationships and interactions, while meeting new problems, commitments and situations which form social change"*. Perhaps, the university as an institution, akin to individual behaviour, possesses its own 'life-world' (to borrow from Schutz, 1973), in which it maintains a number of societal positions and roles based on its conferred status, dominant ideology, historical position and socio-cultural obligations. In the changing and challenging phases of open and full partnership the navigation of these 'life-world' roles and positions shift and balance against each other, sometimes disruptively.

Furthermore, in seeking to bring out 'the darkside' of this educational challenge, Stephen Brookfield's (1994) analysis of the demands of individual adult learning may have some institutional application. The increased and deeper sets of relationship with disadvantaged and excluded communities, consideration of challenging ideas, and the development of empathic understanding (almost solidarity) with the partners, were always likely to challenge established university certainties, traditions, and modes of behaviour. Brookfield uses the term 'lost innocence' to describe this process at the individual level and I believe that it easily transfers to an institutional setting. While open partnership has the potential to enhance institutional empowerment, it may also induce institutional confusion and anxiety which may in turn lead to a rejection of the partnership and its recommendations. The university institution, if and when pressed to fully mainstream and integrate innovative proposals, may perceive itself as discarding an old and trusted **modus operandi** without adequate compensatory structures and practices. This may cause the institution to seek the

comfort of old assurances and reject the consequences and implications of open partnership in educational development with excluded communities.

The support and encouragement of the President of my Institution, the Registrar, Finance Officer and Secretary, the Dean of Arts, other College personnel and bodies, and the subsequent approval of the Report of the Initiative by the Governing Body affirmed the Institution's commitment to the process and its outcomes. Such partnerships are now the norm in our working relationships with many different communities of learners in different settings.

Finally, one has to acknowledge the existence and importance, in our on going partnership relationships, of community celebration and affirmation at levels, and with such intense sincerity, that one does not often find with adult learners in other sectors of society. As an invited guest at many of the local occasions of celebration of learning success on Cork's Northside, one sensed palpable feelings of success and achievement, resilience and support, joy and celebration, sufficient to overcome adversity and exclusion. These Northside adult role models, some 300 of them now diplomates and students on a range of degree courses in our University, will, I am convinced make a major contribution to breaking the cycle of exclusion and disadvantage.

CONCLUSION

Looking back over the past five decades of adult education at University College, Cork one is struck by the realities of both continuity and change as the guiding rationale moved from Roman Catholic social reconstructionism to community partnership and empowerment.

Not alone did the structures put in place under O'Rahilly's sponsorship persist but such was their robustness that they allowed for change to the point where they departed from O'Rahilly's ideological position. The administrative structure of the Adult Education Committee, the Adult Education Department and outreach personnel as well as the outreach and cooperative ethos facilitated the identification of new needs and more inclusive mechanisms for programme construction and delivery. Most significant of all, however, was the modification in the content of

the Diploma courses to the point where they were no longer synonymous with Roman Catholic social thinking.

The process of modernisation, evident in Irish society at large from the 1960s, proved to be a potent force for change in university adult education. The questioning of confessional values and challenges to prevailing socio-religious doxa was reflected in new programme provision and learning opportunities for adults in a much more broadly defined rationale. The nexus between Catholic Church influence (and control) and adult education personnel and programmes was reduced considerably as secularist and competing themes and interests were accommodated in a much broader and more inclusive model of provision. Essentially, the modification of the content of the Diploma programmes resulted in the development of non-confessional and non-prescriptive learning objectives. The 1990s have in turn witnessed significant developments in the areas of partnership and empowerment as the University considered its role, structures, and processes in effecting change in the delivery and experience of adult education designed to facilitate and promote social inclusion.

Fifty years on, O'Rahilly would still recognise some of the core values and structures. No doubt he would disapprove of certain developments and changes. He would, nonetheless, have to take satisfaction from the fact that the adult learning project which he initiated in University College, Cork has outlived the era which generated it and through organic development continues to be found relevant to successive generations of adult learners. For the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education, its distinctive achievement in this regard must be its success in maintaining O'Rahilly's commitment to social change through education at a time of market forces and values in education, and its transformation of O'Rahilly's prescriptive conception of citizenship to a more participative and inclusive one.

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